

South Dakota National Guard

Public Affairs Office

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SD Guard, Denmark partnership gives officer candidates international perspective during training

By 1st Lt. Rebecca Linder
2nd Battalion, 196th Regiment (Regional Training Institute)

NORRE NEBEL, Denmark – Three members of South Dakota Army National Guard’s 2nd Battalion, 196th Regiment (Regional Training Institute) traveled to western Denmark to train members of the Danish Home Guard, Denmark’s equivalent to the Army National Guard.

The Soldiers, based out of Sioux Falls, S.D., conducted the U.S. Army Basic Instructor Course during the Danish Home Guard’s one-week summer camp at Nymindegab Camp, graduating 11 members at a July 8 ceremony.

As graduates of the course, members of the Home Guard will put their skills to use as instructors at the SDARNG’s Officer Candidate School at Fort Meade, S.D.

Through the DoD Reserve Officers Foreign Exchange Program, the SDARNG, and the 196th RTI in particular, have had a growing partnership with the Danish Home Guard since 2014.

“The relationship we have affords us the opportunity to execute the OCS Program of Instruction in a manner no other national OCS program can execute,” said Col. Scott Petrik, 196th Regiment commander. “Danish Home Guard soldiers fulfill the requirements as instructors during the program and further advance the knowledge of future leaders in the U.S. Army National Guard by sharing their personal experiences and knowledge with the officer candidates during classroom instruction.”

Over the last two summers, Home Guard instructors who graduated from a 2014 ABIC conducted in Denmark were able instruct in the U.S. and take their experiences back to their fellow soldiers.

“U.S. Soldiers get to learn about Danes and how they do things,” said Pia Hjort, head of the education section for the Danish Home Guard. “We get to learn about how the U.S. National Guard works and take that knowledge back to Denmark.”

“Officer Candidates learn about Danish culture when we instruct and if they deploy with us, they will know how to operate with Danish or other international soldiers,” said Jannik Ruemann, an OCS instructor and Danish Home Guard Soldier. “The instructors and staff learn the same lessons as the OCs, such as tailoring lesson plans to individuals rather than doing a group approach.”

Home Guard soldiers complete the Danish Instructors Course prior to attending ABIC, which allows them to see the different teaching methods and standards of each course.

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“They see another way of doing things,” said Danish Home Guard Maj. Soren Kristensen, head of the planning section for the Danish Home Guard Academy. “I think that we shall continue to learn about our different ways, develop a common understanding about teaching and bring that into play for a third party country.”

Roles will reverse for the first time in August as six soldiers from the Danish Home Guard will travel to Fort Meade to conduct the Danish Instructors Course, enabling Soldiers from the SDARNG to see the Danish way of conducting the course and will also allow for future training in Denmark from U.S. Soldiers.

“The opportunity for growth and development are endless,” said Petrik. “We need to continue to strengthen our relationship with the Danish Home Guard by qualifying more U.S. Soldiers to instruct in Denmark as well as qualifying additional Home Guard Soldiers to instruct courses in the U.S.”

As the partnership between the two continues to strengthen, the two organizations look to expand instructing roles beyond OCS.

“We have a great opportunity to strengthen our relationship by incorporating more Danish Home Guard Soldiers into other phases of the OCS program and also explore the possibility of incorporating Home Guard Soldiers into our Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness, Combat Lifesaver and Field Artillery courses as well,” said Petrik.

U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Jon Gohn, an ABIC instructor with 2nd Battalion, 196th RTI, summarized working with the Danish Home Guard as one of the most wonderful events he’s had the opportunity to participate in his nearly 17 years in the SDARNG.

“The students were some of the most professional, friendly and hardworking we have had the opportunity to work with,” said Gohn. “Their leadership down to the lowest enlisted were simply superb. I look forward to the friendships gained and hope that a partnership with this great military organization is long lasting.”

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High resolution photos are available at www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotanguard



160704-Z-GY802-001: U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Jon Gohn, 2nd Battalion, 196th Regiment (Regional Training Institute), South Dakota Army National Guard, instructs the U.S. Army Basic Instructor Course for 11 members of the Danish Home Guard at Nymindégab Camp in Norre Nebel, Denmark, July 4, 2016. The Home Guard soldiers will use the skills learned to instruct at the South Dakota Army National Guard’s Officer Candidate School through a partnership with the state since 2014. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by 1st Lt. Rebecca Linder)



160707-Z-GY802-001: Danish Home Guard 1st Lt. Ib Nielson, center, gives a 50-minute presentation on the Core Test, a part of their physical fitness test, at Nymindégab Camp in Norre Nebel, Denmark, July 7, 2016. The presentation is part of the graduation requirements of the U.S. Army Basic Instructor Course and includes a conference, demonstration and practical exercise during the brief. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by 1st Lt. Rebecca Linder)



160707-Z-GY802-002: U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Mark Goldammer, right, an instructor for 2nd Battalion, 196th Regiment (Regional Training Institute), South Dakota Army National Guard, evaluates Danish Home Guard students, Pvt. Stig Christensen, left, and 1st Lt. Ib Nielson, during the U.S. Army Basic Instructor Course at Nymindagab Camp in Norre Nebel, Denmark, July 7, 2016. This is Goldammer's second time to Denmark to conduct the course, which certifies Home Guard students as instructors to support the SDARNG's Officer Candidate School program at Fort Meade, S.D. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by 1st Lt. Rebecca Linder)



160707-Z-GY802-003: Danish Home Guard 1st Lt. Tim Dalvang Andersen instructs a 50-minute presentation on orienteering during the U.S. Army Basic Instructor Course at Nymindagab Camp in Norre Nebel, Denmark, July 7, 2016. Andersen is one of 11 soldiers who completed the course with plans of instructing at the South Dakota Army National Guard Officer Candidate School Program in Fort Meade, S.D. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by 1st Lt. Rebecca Linder)



160707-Z-ZZ999-001: Danish Home Guard students and instructors from the 2-196th Regiment (Regional Training Institute), South Dakota Army National Guard pose for a photo during a U.S. Army Basic Instructor Course at Nymindagab camp in Norre Nebel, Denmark July 7, 2016. Eleven students graduated from the course July 8 and will be certified to teach in S.D. at the state's National Guard Officer Candidate School program. (Courtesy Photo)

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